

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I do say, first off, I truly appreciate the words and the passion from my good friend from the U.S. Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT). I am disappointed to see that this bill came back from the Senate without the provisions that we supported on her behalf in the committee.

Madam Speaker, I, too, would like to echo to the Senate and to the House as we move into the future: Let's address this concern. There is bipartisan support for what Ms. PLASKETT is asking for.

These are the types of bipartisan issues that we usually try and solve in the House, but, unfortunately, we got this from the Senate. We will let them be the ones to admit they screwed this up with a technical error.

But let's fix it. That is the key. Let's work together to make that happen.

Madam Speaker, in closing, S. 3418 will help support critical mitigation projects in local communities, including rural communities that are hit and devastated by these natural disasters. This will save lives and prevent damage and loss to farmers, businesses, and homeowners across the country, and it is also going to save, long term, billions upon billions of taxpayer dollars that are going, time and time again, to help communities recover from events we know are going to happen.

Let's do something on the front end and save taxpayer dollars for the next generation on the back end.

Madam Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't thank the staff on both sides of the aisle for their work to get this bill to a good place and with the Senate: on the majority side, Aaron Davis; on our own side, Johanna Hardy; and in my office, Jimmy Ballard. I really appreciate all these folks and what they have done to help districts like mine.

I also thank some folks who really worked hard on this bill, too, that are with me here today from the committee: Corey Cooke and her number one fan, her puppy, Coda Cooke; and also Tara Hupman and her number one fan, her puppy, Chester Hupman. I certainly hope my number one fans, when I get home, Rider and Julia Davis, one day get a chance to meet theirs.

But it takes people working together to get things done, and these are the types of issues that show our success in this institution.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, first of all, I appreciate the words of my colleague on the other side of the aisle with respect to Ms. PLASKETT's notion. I don't know why the notion of pennywise and pound foolish—if that is the reason why this bipartisan bill that was sent to the Senate was sent back to us absent some Americans. I understand they

will be working to try to fix this, but we don't fix it when we allow disasters to move forward in the part of our country where disasters are more likely to affect. They are not most likely to take effect in places like the District of Columbia where we just had a snowstorm and hardly a little bit of snow. They are far more likely to take effect in Ms. PLASKETT's district in the Virgin Islands.

Madam Speaker, I pledge with my good friend on the other side, with whom I have worked closely in the past, to do everything I can to make sure that all of us, including all of our territories, not only Puerto Rico, are included in this bill, as the House intended.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, notwithstanding the issues that both sides here in the House have with it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CRAIG. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 3418, the Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation Act or the STORM Act, as amended.

I want to thank Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman PETER DEFAZIO, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management Chair DINA TITUS and Ranking Members SAM GRAVES and JOHN KATKO for their work on this bill to get us to where we are today.

I also want to thank fellow T&I Member RODNEY DAVIS for being a strong partner with me on this from the outset. I am also grateful to Majority Leader HOYER for scheduling a vote on this bill.

Finally, I also want to thank the diligent members of the Committee's staff, particularly Aaron Davis, for helping us reach this historic milestone. I also want to thank a former member of my staff, Natalie Martinez, for helping to lead the introduction of this bill and my Legislative Director Will Mitchell for helping to bring the bill across the finish line.

Madam Speaker, by way of background, the original version of the STORM Act was introduced last July as H.R.3779, the Resilience Revolving Loan Fund Act of 2019 following a catastrophic spring where Minnesota experienced one of the most devastating flood seasons on record.

In response, I worked closely with local mayors in Minnesota dealing with the aftermath of this flooding to develop the concept of a resilience fund and establish a low-interest loan program for states to fund pre-disaster mitigation projects which greatly reduce the risks and costs of natural disasters. Revolving fund loans will be available for projects that minimize the risks of wildfires, earthquakes, floods, storm surges, tornadoes, and other events deemed catastrophic by FEMA.

The revolving fund concept is modeled after similar state revolving funds authorized and funded by Congress for projects that have resulted in a significant increase in the capacity and capabilities of water infrastructure in communities across the nation.

It is our hope that our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee will see the wisdom in the revolving fund concept and fully capitalize this program starting in Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 so that disaster mitigation can see that same significant return on investment.

Madam Speaker, another benefit of this bill is that it opens up mitigation funds to a new set of eligible folks. Currently, most FEMA hazard mitigation programs restrict Public Assistance mitigation funds if projects may accrue to the benefit of homeowners and businesses—which can create challenges, particularly in rural areas of my Congressional District with lower populations and large areas of farmland. The revolving loan fund before us today is specifically intended to reduce risks for homeowners, businesses, nonprofit organizations and communities.

As a matter of process, Madam Speaker, I'm pleased that our bill, like the STORM Act, moved through regular order on the Committee and attracted bipartisan, unanimous support when it passed the House. Since March of this year when the STORM Act was introduced, staff members on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee worked closely together to iron out technical differences and present a final bill that can be signed into law by the President.

Throughout the process, we attracted and maintained the support of a number of groups that partnered together to build the political will necessary to pass this bill. In particular, I want to thank the American Council of Engineering Companies, The American Institute of Architects, American Society of Civil Engineers, American Society of Landscape Architects, City Parks Alliance, Ecological Restoration Business Association, Interstate Council on Water Policy, Mississippi Rivers Cities and Towns Initiative, National Recreation and Park Association, The Nature Conservancy and U.S. Chamber of Commerce for their support.

As part of the Mississippi Rivers Cities and Towns Initiative, I want to give special thanks to Executive Director Colin Wellenkamp and outgoing Red Wing Mayor Sean Dowse—who were also instrumental in this effort.

Madam Speaker, in closing, passage of the STORM Act will be an important step in making our towns and cities more resilient. I'm thrilled to be leading the bipartisan effort for smart, proactive investments in disaster-resilient infrastructure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3418.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL ADVANCE CONTRACTS ENHANCEMENT ACT

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 979) to amend the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 to incorporate the recommendations made by the Government Accountability Office relating to advance contracts, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 979

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Federal Advance Contracts Enhancement Act” or the “FACE Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) the Post-Katrina Emergency Management and Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-925; 120 Stat. 1394) required the Federal Emergency Management Agency to establish advance contracts, which are established prior to disasters and are typically needed to quickly provide life-sustaining goods and services in the immediate aftermath of a disaster;

(2) the catastrophic hurricanes and wildfires in the United States in 2017 highlighted the importance of these advance contracts in disaster response;

(3) in a report issued by the Government Accountability Office entitled “2017 Disaster Contracting: Action Needed to Better Ensure More Effective Use and Management of Advance Contracts”, the Government Accountability Office identified a number of challenges with advance contracts and recommended actions to improve management by the Federal Emergency Management Agency of these contracts for future disasters; and

(4) section 691 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 791) should be amended to incorporate the recommendations made by the report described in paragraph (3) to ensure more effective use and management of advance contracts.

SEC. 3. FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY ADVANCE CONTRACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 691 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 791) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) UPDATED REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an updated report that contains—

“(1) the information required in the initial report under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of subsection (a)(1); and

“(2) an updated strategy described in subsection (a)(1)(C) that clearly defines—

“(A) the objectives of advance contracts;

“(B) how advance contracts contribute to disaster response operations of the Agency;

“(C) how to maximize the award of advance contracts to small business concerns, as defined in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632); and

“(D) whether and how advance contracts should be prioritized in relation to new post-disaster contract awards.

“(f) ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF THE ADMINISTRATOR.—

“(1) HEAD OF CONTRACTING.—The Administrator shall ensure that the head of contracting activity of the Agency—

“(A) not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, updates the Disaster Contracting Desk Guide of the Agency to provide specific guidance—

“(i) on whether and under what circumstances contracting officers should consider using existing advance contracts entered into in accordance with this section prior to making new post-disaster contract awards, and include this guidance in existing semi-annual training given to contracting officers; and

“(ii) for contracting officers to perform outreach to State and local governments on the potential benefits of establishing their own pre-negotiated advance contracts;

“(B) adheres to hard copy contract file management requirements in effect to ensure that the files relating to advance contracts entered into in accordance with this section are complete and up to date, whether the files will be transferred into the Electronic Contract Filing System of the Agency or remain in hard copy format;

“(C) notifies contracting officers of the 3-day time frame requirement for entering completed award documentation into the contract writing system of the Agency when executing notice to proceed documentation;

“(D) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, revises the reporting methodology of the Agency to ensure that all disaster contracts are included in each quarterly report submitted to the appropriate congressional committees under this section on disaster contract actions;

“(E) identifies a single centralized resource listing advance contracts entered into under this section and ensures that source is current and up to date and includes all available advance contracts; and

“(F) communicates complete and up-to-date information on available advance contracts to State and local governments to inform their advance contracting efforts.

“(2) MASTER ACQUISITION PLANNING SCHEDULE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Administrator shall update and implement guidance for program office and acquisition personnel of the Agency to—

“(A) identify acquisition planning time frames and considerations across the entire acquisition planning process of the Agency; and

“(B) clearly communicate the purpose and use of a master acquisition planning schedule.”.

(b) REPORT.—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall regularly update the appropriate committees of Congress (as defined in section 602 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 701)) on the progress of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in implementing the recommendations of the Government Accountability Office in the report entitled “2017 Disaster Contracting: Action Needed to Better Ensure More Effective Use and Management of Advance Contracts”, as required under section 691 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 791), as amended by subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 979.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia? There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 979, the Federal Advance Contracts Enhancement Act. This bipartisan and bicameral bill introduced in the Senate

by Senators RUBIO, PETERS, JOHNSON, and TILLIS, and in the House by Representatives BENNIE THOMPSON, DONALD PAYNE, Jr., MIKE ROGERS, and PETER KING addresses the findings of the Government Accountability Office's report titled “2017 Disaster Contracting: Actions Needed to Better Ensure More Effective Use and Management of Advance Contracts.”

In its report, GAO found several issues with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's handling of advance contracts, including limitations in the agency's use of some advance contracts, Congressional committees being provided with incomplete information in FEMA reports, and coordination with States and localities on the use of advance contracts.

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GAO made final recommendations, including that FEMA update its strategy and guidance to clarify the use of advance contracts, improve the timeliness of its acquisition planning activities, revise its methodology for reporting disaster contracting actions to congressional committees, and provide more consistent guidance and information to contracting officers to coordinate with and encourage States and localities to establish advance contracts.

FEMA concurred with all of GAO's recommendations.

Following Hurricane Katrina, Congress required FEMA to establish advance contracts for goods and services to enable the Federal Government to quickly mobilize resources to affected areas in the aftermath of a disaster.

This bill allows FEMA to ensure more effective use and management of its advance contracts process by incorporating GAO's recommendations to ensure that Federal preparedness actions are coordinated to prevent gaps in recovery efforts from occurring.

The bill also requires FEMA to regularly update the appropriate committees of Congress on the progress of the agency's implementation of these recommendations.

Given this year's unprecedented level of disaster activity, it is critical that Congress enact these reforms ahead of the start of the next disaster season in order to ensure that both FEMA and our States, Tribes, territories, and localities are well-prepared and equipped for future disasters.

Madam Speaker, I support S. 979, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, S. 979, the Federal Advance Contracts Enhancement Act, or FACE Act, will improve disaster preparedness and ensure State and local governments receive more consistent guidance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Following Hurricane Katrina, Congress directed FEMA to establish advance contracts ahead of disasters to

rapidly provide goods and services following a disaster.

Following the 2017 hurricanes and wildfires, the Government Accountability Office reviewed the use of advance contracts and identified a number of shortcomings, including unclear guidance and inconsistent information from FEMA on using these advance contracts.

Ultimately, GAO issued nine recommendations, and FEMA has concurred with every single one of them.

This bill would require FEMA to provide an updated report on advance contracts, updated its strategy, improve its guidance for FEMA personnel, and regularly report to Congress on progress in addressing GAO's recommendations.

These reforms will help improve our disaster preparedness and provide clarity to States and local communities on how to better leverage these useful contracts.

I am proud to stand with my colleague, Ms. NORTON, to support this bill in a bipartisan way because, if there is one thing that the Federal Government should do right, it is to help communities recover from disasters they had nothing to do with.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, the gentleman has yielded, and I certainly concur with him. I am very pleased that this bill comes out now, in the season of climate change, where we have seen increased disasters in our country.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 979.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 965, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DRONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2730) to establish and ensure an inclusive and transparent Drone Advisory Committee.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2730

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Drone Advisory Committee for the 21st Century Act".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the Sense of Congress that:

(1) Due to the ever-increasing use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems in the agriculture, forestry, and rangeland sectors, as well as the inherently different uses in less populated parts of the nation, membership of the Drone Advisory Committee established by the Federal Aviation Administration should, to the extent practicable, include direct representatives from county and tribal government, agriculture, forestry, and rangeland interests.

(2) Full transparency in the work of the Drone Advisory Committee is vital to ensuring the public can effectively participate and contribute to the development of sound Federal policies. The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration should, to the maximum extent practicable, ensure the work of the Drone Advisory Committee is shared with and easily accessible to the public and shall ensure transparency and openness in the manner in which the affairs of the Committee are conducted.

SEC. 3. DRONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP.

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Aviation Administration shall take appropriate steps to encourage direct representation of county and tribal governments as well as agriculture, forestry, rangeland sectors, and other rural interests on the Drone Advisory Committee.

(2) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include public participation in the process of nominating individuals for membership on the Committee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 2730.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2730, the Drone Advisory Committee for the 21st Century Act, introduced by Senator PETERS of Michigan.

The number of unmanned aircraft systems, or drones, in the United States airspace has grown exponentially in recent years. The growth is expected to continue, as drones are deployed for more and more uses each year. Drones have become important tools to assist with everything from infrastructure inspection and lifesaving missions to delivering medical supplies and prescriptions.

As the Federal Aviation Administration continues its efforts to safely integrate drones into the National Airspace System, the work of the Drone Advisory Committee, an FAA advisory committee that provides the agency with advice and recommendations on

key drone integration issues, will continue to play an important role in such efforts.

The Drone Advisory Committee is currently comprised of executives from a cross-section of interested stakeholders, including academia, drone manufacturers and operators, aviation labor, and local governments, among others. While drones are increasingly being used in the agriculture, forestry, and rangeland sectors and by county and Tribal governments, these stakeholders are not represented adequately in the current committee makeup.

S. 2730 would, therefore, require the FAA to take appropriate steps to encourage the direct representation of county and Tribal governments, as well as agriculture, forestry, rangeland sectors, and other rural interests, on the Drone Advisory Committee. The bill will also require the FAA to include public participation in the process of nominating individuals for advisory committee membership going forward.

The efforts outlined in S. 2730 will not only include transparency and openness in how the Drone Advisory Committee's membership is constructed, but they will also help ensure the insights of stakeholders, with vast experience operating drones and perspectives regarding their integration, are reflected in the advisory committee's important work, ultimately informing future FAA decisionmaking.

Madam Speaker, I support this legislation, I urge my colleagues to do the same, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I again rise in support of another great piece of bipartisan legislation, S. 2730, the Drone Advisory Committee for the 21st Century Act.

The Drone Advisory Committee is a long-term advisory committee that provides the Federal Aviation Administration with advice on key drone integration issues.

S. 2730 directs the FAA to ensure that there is broad participation on this committee that develops policies for unmanned aircraft systems, or drones, and their growing uses.

S. 2730 also directs the FAA to consider public opinion when nominating anyone to serve on the Drone Advisory Committee.

Imagine that, a government agency asking the public, who is intricately involved in issues related to drone technology and the ability to use drones in and around our public airspace—imagine having public opinion determine who should be best to serve.

This is another example where Republicans and Democrats have come together to offer solutions. It is sad we have to put them on paper, to put them into legislation sometimes; but here we are today, and I am glad it is happening.

Having committee participation from those in rural areas, especially, will